

THE REMONSTRANCE.

BOSTON, JANUARY, 1909.

The Remonstrance is published quarterly by the Massachusetts Association Opposed to the Further Extension of Suffrage to Women. It expresses the views of women in Massachusetts, Maine, Rhode Island, New York, Illinois, Iowa, Oregon, Washington, and other states who believe that the great majority of their sex do not want the ballot, and that to force it upon them would not only be an injustice to women, but would lessen their influence for good and imperil the community. The Remonstrants ask a thoughtful consideration of their views in the interest of fair discussion.

Any one who desires to receive the quarterly numbers can do so by enclosing 25 cents in stamps to the Treasurer,

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Information in regard to The Remonstrance and other publications of the Association may be obtained from the Corresponding Secretary, Mrs. Charles P. Strong, 24 Concord Avenue, Cambridge.

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IN PROCESS OF DEFEAT.

AMERICAN suffragists have objected strenuously to the phrase in one of Mrs. Humphry Ward's letters in the London Times, in which she described the suffrage movement in the United States as "in process of defeat."

Yet it requires only a glance at the record to prove that Mrs. Ward's phrase is accurately descriptive. When a propaganda, persistently and energetically pushed in more than half the states in the Union, has not achieved a single success worth mentioning in twelve years, may it not truthfully be said to be "in process of defeat"? This is the record of the suffrage movement in the United States. The list of suffrage successes which the suffrage newspapers are so fond of publishing closes with 1896, when the women of Utah and Idaho were given the ballot. Since that date no state has granted full suffrage to women; no state has given them municipal suffrage; the only gains have been unimportant enactments in a few states, such as those which allow taxpaying women to vote on the rare occasions when questions of expenditure or borrowing are submitted to the vote of taxpayers.

The record in Massachusetts is instructive in this connection. In 1897 the Massachusetts House of Representatives defeated a resolve for the submission of a suffrage amendment to the constitution by a vote of 53 yeas to 86 nays. Ten years later, only 14 members of the House voted for a similar resolve, and the negative vote was 125. The intervening years had shown a steady decline in the favoring vote; in 1898, to 44 votes; in 1899, to 31 votes, and so on.

As to municipal suffrage, in 1894 the House actually passed a municipal suffrage bill by a vote of 122 to 106, and only the conservatism of the Senate prevented its enactment. Last year the House defeated a similar bill by a vote of 30 yeas to 99 nays. Does not this look as if the suffrage movement were "in process of defeat"? The suffragists resent the intimation that the formation of associations of American women to oppose woman suffrage has had anything to do with

this check to the suffrage movement, but it is at least an interesting coincidence that the active work of these associations, in Massachusetts, New York, Illinois, and elsewhere, began in 1895-6, just before the tide turned in the matter of suffrage legislation.

CLASS DISTINCTIONS.

LAST year the suffragists in two states as widely separated as Massachusetts and Oregon committed themselves to the principle of basing the right to vote upon the ownership of property. In Massachusetts they introduced a bill to confer full municipal suffrage upon women taxpayers. In Oregon they changed the form of their petition for the submission of a suffrage amendment to the constitution at the next election, so that, if the amendment were adopted, it would give full suffrage to taxpaying women.

There is some plausibility in the argument that, when questions involving the expenditure of money or the creation of debt are submitted to the vote of taxpayers as such, women as well as men who pay taxes should be allowed to vote.

But this is quite another thing from saying that a woman who pays taxes is on that account better qualified to vote for mayors and aldermen, as under the Massachusetts proposal, or for governors, congressmen, and presidents, as under the Oregon proposal, than women who do not pay taxes. A ballot which rests upon intelligence and provides an educational test can be defended. But a ballot which ignores intelligence and character and rests merely on the possession of wealth is alien to democratic principles, and it would create among women, if the Massachusetts and Oregon proposals were adopted, class distinctions which no state in the Union tolerates among men.

SHOULD A MINORITY RULE?

In a letter to the *London Times*, in reply to Mrs. Humphry Ward, Mrs. Julia Ward Howe writes, "In America most women are still indifferent on the question of suffrage."

This candid admission, by the accredited leader of the woman suffrage movement in the United States, should not be forgotten. It accords exactly with the view of the remonstrants. How small the suffrage minority is may be inferred from the fact that, when the opportunity was given to Massachusetts women of voting age, in 1895, to say by their votes on the pending referendum whether they wanted the municipal ballot, only about four per cent of them responded in the affirmative. There is no reason to believe that the proportion varies materially in other states.

In view of Mrs. Howe's admission, two questions may properly be considered by members of state legislatures before which suffrage proposals may come this year:

First, Ought the wishes of the four per cent of American women who want the ballot, or those of the ninety-six per cent who are either opposed or indifferent to it, to control the decision?

Second, Is there not already among men voters quite as much indifference to the ballot as is consistent with the public good without adding an enormous number of women voters who, on the testimony of the suffrage leaders themselves, are indifferent to it?

WHO WOULD PROFIT?

LEGISLATORS who are asked this year to vote for bills conferring municipal suffrage upon women may wisely consider the question, Who would be profited by the proposed legislation?

Would it be the women? Only a small minority of the women ask for the privilege. To the large majority it would come as an undesired burden. In what respect would either class, the minority or the majority, profit by the grant of municipal suffrage?

Would it be the community? To justify this assumption it must be held that the average woman would vote not only as wisely and unselfishly as the average man, but more wisely and unselfishly. But the average man, by the very nature of his ordinary employments, is familiar with the practical questions of local

government, questions of the care of the streets, lighting, policing, sewer construction, and the like. He is familiar also with the character, capacity, and records of men who are candidates for office. The average woman, on the other hand, is already overburdened with duties which she cannot escape and from which no one proposes to relieve her. If she is given the suffrage, it is an added duty. Is it reasonable to suppose that, called upon to perform a duty which lies outside of the ordinary employments of her life, she would do it more wisely than the average man? Would she not inevitably act hastily, impulsively, spasmodically? And, in that case, would not the community as well as she herself suffer by the change?

PRESIDENTIAL SUFFRAGE BILLS.

No legislature has yet been persuaded to take seriously the proposal to give presidential suffrage to women. It is true that, two years ago, one branch of the Rhode Island legislature voted favorably upon such a bill, but this was only in playful mood, to give the other branch the opportunity to defeat it. Last year the bill did not get out of the committee to which it was referred.

A sufficient objection to such bills is that they involve a high-handed usurpation of power. They are unblushingly urged by the suffragists as an expedient for avoiding the necessity of submitting the question to the people. But, if any principle is well established in American government, it is that radical changes in the fundamental law shall be submitted to the approval of the people. A proposal to double the electorate in the exercise of the highest form of suffrage is surely such a change.

Yet the suffragists urge a legislature which has no mandate from the people for such action to enact presidential suffrage without giving the people a chance to vote upon it, at any stage. It is not strange that the legislatures do not take the proposal seriously.

AN ANTI-SUFFRAGE MEETING IN NEW YORK.

LETTERS FROM PRESIDENT
ROOSEVELT AND SECRETARY
ROOT.

ADDRESSES BY REV. DR. LYMAN
ABBOTT AND MR. GILDER.

THE National League for the Civic Education of Women held a meeting at the Berkeley Lyceum, in New York City, December 4. Mr. Richard Watson Gilder presided and introduced Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler, president of Columbia University, who read the following letter from Secretary Root:

Secretary Root's Letter.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE.

WASHINGTON, November 23, 1908.

My dear Mrs. Jones,—I have examined with great interest the announcement of the League for the Civic Education of Women for the coming season and the subjects of the lectures which are proposed.

I think the work which you are proposing to do will be of very great benefit. I do not myself consider that the granting of suffrage to women would, under the existing conditions, be any improvement in our system of government. On the contrary, I think it would rather reduce than increase the electoral efficiency of our people. I am inclined to think, however, that if the women of the United States, or any very large majority of them, should really come to want the right of suffrage for themselves, they would ultimately get it.

For the purpose of exercising the right of suffrage if they should ever get it, and for the purpose of determining intelligently whether they really want it, the women of the country generally ought to have and to seize the opportunity for a greater degree of education in questions of government and in the practical art of government than they have had up to this time. I think such lectures and distribution of literature as you propose will be a very valuable aid in bringing this about. With kind regards I am,

Very sincerely yours,

ELIHU ROOT.

Mrs. GILBERT E. JONES,

222 Madison Ave., New York.

Mr. Gilder's Address.

Mr. Gilder made a short address, in which he referred to the recently-published statistics of the Census Bureau relating to the increase of divorce in the United States. He said:

Within a few days the country has been shocked by the appalling official figures of divorce in the United States. In the face of this lamentable showing as to an increasing weakness of the sentiment of home and family in America, it is reassuring to find so many women willing to stand forth and insist upon the fact that the home and the family are the foundations of the best things that humanity has yet achieved; and to lift up their voices against what, in their solemn belief, is a new, insidious, and possibly disastrous attack upon the fundamentals of civilization.

A Letter from President Roosevelt.

The Rev. Dr. Lyman Abbott, who was the chief speaker of the occasion, prefaced his address by reading a letter from President Roosevelt which he explained had not been written for the occasion or for publication, but which he had been given permission to use:

THE WHITE HOUSE.

WASHINGTON, November 10, 1908.

My dear Dr. Abbott,—Personally I believe in woman's suffrage, but I am not an enthusiastic advocate of it, because I do not regard it as a very important matter. I am unable to see that there has been any special improvement in the position of women in those states in the West that have adopted woman's suffrage, as compared with those states adjoining them that have not adopted it. I do not think that giving the women suffrage will produce any marked improvement in the condition of women. I do not believe that it will produce any of the evils feared, and I am very certain that when women as a whole take any special interest in the matter they will have suffrage if they desire it.

But at present I think most of them are lukewarm; I find some actively for it, and some actively against it. I am, for the reasons above given, rather what you would regard as lukewarm or tepid in my support of it because, while I believe in it, I do not regard it as of very much importance. I believe that man and woman should stand on an equality of right, but I do not believe that equality of right

means identity of functions; and I am more and more convinced that the great field, the indispensable field, for the usefulness of woman is as the mother of the family.

It is her work in the household, in the home, her work in bearing and rearing the children, which is more important than any man's work, and it is the work which should be normally the woman's special work, just as normally the man's work should be that of the breadwinner, the supporter of the home, and, if necessary, the soldier who will fight for the home. There are exceptions as regards both man and woman; but the full and perfect life, the life of highest happiness and of highest usefulness to the state, is the life of the man and woman who are husband and wife, who live in the partnership of love and duty, the one earning enough to keep the home, the other managing the home and the children.

Sincerely yours,

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

Dr. Abbott's Address.

The idea that woman was no longer the property of her husband had grown, Dr. Abbott said, into the idea that a husband might, as in pagan Rome, dismiss his wife as easily as he would his gardener and that a wife might part from her husband much more easily than she could from her cook. Divorces, he continued, had for the last twenty years been granted in the proportion of about one hundred and fifty for every working day, and many of them had been obtained on such pretexts as a failure on the part of a wife to sew on her husband's shirt buttons or the cruelty of a husband in not taking his wife out driving. One woman had suggested the expedient of trial marriages for the period of one year, leaving it to the will of the persons involved to make the union permanently binding at the end of that time if they so willed.

"This sort of sentiment is not," he said, "confined to faddists. In 1853, Elizabeth Cady Stanton said: 'A union of souls alone constitutes and sanctifies true marriage, and any law or public sentiment that forces two immortal high-born souls to live together as husband and wife, unless by love, is false to God and to humanity.'"

Dr. Abbott declared that if he believed that the suffrage was the right of woman, or would protect their rights, or promote their interests, he should be "not mildly, but ardently, in favor of it." The "woman's

majority against it was 10,173. In 1908, when the people once more voted on the question, the majority against it rose to 21,812. In the campaign of 1906 alone, the Oregon women opposed to woman suffrage circulated over a million pieces of literature.

The associations of women opposed to woman suffrage comprise members from all classes and conditions of life, taxpaying and professional women, salaried and wage-earning women, home-loving women, married and single women. We are proud of the constituencies we represent and believe they are composed of as high-minded and intelligent women as the country possesses. With their support we continue our work with unabated zeal and confidence.

We extend our greeting across the sea to the brave English women who are working to uphold the established institutions of their country.

For the Executive Committee of the Massachusetts Association Opposed to the Further Extension of Suffrage to Women,

Mrs. G. HOWLAND SHAW, *President.*

Mrs. CHARLES ELIOT GUILD,
Vice-President.

For the Executive Committee of the New York Association Opposed to the Extension of Suffrage to Women,

Mrs. FRANCIS M. SCOTT, *President.*

Mrs. ARTHUR M. DODGE,
First Vice-President.

OCTOBER 27, 1908.

AN ENGLISH ANTI-SUFFRAGE COMMITTEE.

LONDON, December 4. — A gathering yesterday attended by a number of peers, members of the House of Commons, and other prominent men, made itself a general committee to oppose female suffrage. One of the resolutions of the new formed body expressed the belief that the "extension of the franchise to women would be contrary to the best interests of the country and empire." Earl Cromer, the Earl of Dunraven and Lord Rothschild are among the peers on the committee. The members of the House of Commons on the committee are less conspicuous, but scientists are strongly represented. The latter include Baron Lister, Sir James Crichton-Browne, Sir William Crookes, Sir James Dewar, Sir William Ramsey, and Sir Edwin Lankester. There are several well-known literary members, including Rudyard Kipling. The committee will meet again shortly to arrange a fighting program.

RECENT DEFEATS OF WOMAN SUFFRAGE.

IN 1906.

In Iowa and Massachusetts resolutions providing for the submission of constitutional amendments were defeated. In Iowa and Rhode Island presidential suffrage bills passed one branch of the legislature but were defeated in the other. In Massachusetts a license suffrage bill, a bill for municipal suffrage for wage-earning women, and a bill to admit women to caucuses for the nomination of School Committee were defeated. In New York a bill to allow tax-paying women in cities of the third class to vote upon propositions involving an expenditure of money was again defeated. In Ohio bills allowing women to vote at local option elections and on questions affecting the schools were rejected. In Vermont, a municipal suffrage bill passed the House but was killed in the Senate. In Oregon, a constitutional amendment conferring full suffrage upon women was defeated at the polls by a majority of 10,173.

IN 1907.

In California, a resolution providing for the submission of a suffrage amendment to the constitution which had passed the Assembly by exactly the required two-thirds vote, failed in the Senate, March 1, having received only 17 affirmative votes, when 27 were required. Twelve votes were cast against it, and 11 senators did not vote. March 5, a motion to reconsider failed, receiving but 25 votes. Thirteen Senators voted against it, and 2 did not vote.

In Connecticut, June 11, the House rejected a presidential suffrage bill, 55 to 93, and a municipal suffrage bill, 56 to 86. The Senate chose to regard both bills as a jest, and only one senator voted upon them. His vote was in the affirmative.

In Illinois, the Chicago charter convention, February 16, rejected a resolution recommending the legislature to give to women the municipal ballot. In the legislature a proposed constitutional amendment, a general suffrage bill, and a bill giving municipal suffrage to the women of Chicago, were all defeated.

In Indiana, a presidential suffrage bill and a municipal suffrage bill were introduced. Both failed.

In Iowa, a resolution providing for the submission of a suffrage amendment to the constitution was rejected by the Senate, March 22, by a vote of 21 to 26.

In Maine, a resolution for a suffrage amendment to the constitution was rejected by both House and Senate by a unanimous vote.

In Massachusetts, the legislative committee on constitutional amendments voted, 8 to 3, against a resolution for a suffrage amendment to the constitution. In the House, a motion to substitute the amendment resolve for the adverse report received only 14 votes to 125 in the negative, and the report of the committee was then accepted *via voce*. The Senate accepted the adverse report without a division. The committee on election laws reported unanimously against a license suffrage bill, and both houses accepted the report by unanimous vote.

In Minnesota, a resolve for a suffrage amendment to the constitution was indefinitely postponed by the House, February 26, by a vote of 65 to 35, and was defeated in the Senate, April 12, by a vote of 21 yeas to 33 nays.

In Nebraska, a bill memorializing Congress to submit to the state legislatures an equal suffrage amendment to the federal constitution passed the Senate, 17 to 16, but was rejected by the House.

In New Hampshire, a municipal suffrage bill was defeated.

In New York, the Assembly, March 27, rejected, by a vote of 70 to 38, a bill to give tax-paying women in cities of the third class the right to vote on questions of appropriations. A resolution proposing the submission of a suffrage amendment to the constitution was introduced, but the Senate committee on the judiciary voted not to report it.

In Oklahoma, the constitutional convention, February 5, by a vote of 54 to 37, tabled a motion to strike out the word "male" from the proposed qualifications of voters; and February 6, by a vote of 50 to 37, refused to order the question of woman suffrage to be submitted to the electors of the state.

In Oregon, a resolution to submit to the voters of the state in 1908 a woman suffrage amendment without preliminary signatures to an initiative petition passed the House, 31 to 21, but was rejected by the Senate by a vote of 19 to 8.

In Rhode Island, the Senate, February 19, passed a presidential suffrage bill, but the House committee on special legislation voted not to report the measure, and the bill was dropped.

In Texas, a resolution providing for the submission of a suffrage amendment to the constitution was adversely reported and did not reach a vote in the legislature.

In West Virginia, a proposed constitutional amendment was defeated in the legislature.

In Wisconsin, a proposal to submit to the voters a suffrage amendment to the constitution was indefinitely postponed by the House, May 7, by a vote of 53 to 5. In the Senate the vote was at first a tie, but the bill was killed June 19, and a motion to reconsider was rejected June 20, by a decisive vote.

IN 1908.

In Kansas, a presidential suffrage bill, introduced at a special session of the legislature, was ruled out, January 21, on the report of a committee that it was a bill for which there was no apparent emergency. In Kentucky, a bill proposing school suffrage for women, with an educational qualification, was defeated.

In Louisiana, the House, July 1, rejected a proposal to submit an amendment to the constitution allowing women to hold office on educational and charitable boards, and the Senate, July 7, by a vote of 22 to 11, defeated a bill to permit women to vote for members of parish school boards.

In Massachusetts, a municipal suffrage bill was defeated in the House, February 26, on a rising vote, 30 to 99; and a tax-paying municipal suffrage bill was rejected *via voce*. In the Senate, March 2, the adverse reports of the committee on both bills were accepted without debate or a division.

In Michigan, January 29, the constitutional convention, by a vote of 38 yeas to 57 nays, rejected a proposal for full woman suffrage. Later, it adopted a clause allowing women tax-payers to vote on questions submitted to the electors which involve direct expenditure or the issue of bonds.

In New York, a proposed suffrage amendment to the constitution was killed in committee.

In Ohio, a proposed constitutional amendment and a license suffrage bill failed.

In Oregon, June 1, a proposed constitutional amendment was rejected at the polls by a vote of 36,858 to 58,670, an adverse majority of 21,812, as compared with 10,173 in 1906.

In Rhode Island, a presidential suffrage bill was killed in committee.

In Vermont, December 4, a tax-paying municipal suffrage bill was defeated in the Senate, 16 to 11.

A REACTION AGAINST THE SUFFRAGETTES.

THE violence and disregard of law shown by the English suffragettes is having its natural result. It is not only leading to large additions to the organizations formed by women to oppose the suffrage movement, but it is forcing the more moderate suffragists to disavow responsibility for the suffragette performances.

In the concerted interruptions of the Rev. Dr. Lyman Abbott at the New York meeting, December 4, the American public had an opportunity to observe the English suffragette methods exemplified. It is safe to say that such disorderly interferences with the profoundly cherished American rights of free assembly and free speech injure the cause in behalf of which they are made more than anything that its opponents can do.